

THE
REFORMATION OF MEDICAL SCIENCE,

DEMANDED BY

INDUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY:

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

“NEW-YORK PHYSICIANS’ SOCIETY,”

ON THEIR ANNIVERSARY, NOVEMBER 21, 1838.

BY WILLIAM CHANNING, M. D.

Second Edition.

NEW-YORK:
WILEY & PUTNAM, 161 BROADWAY.

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1839.

At an adjourned Anniversary meeting of the "New-York Physicians' Society," November 27, 1838, it was

"Resolved, That the thanks of this Society be presented to Dr. William Channing, for the highly Scientific Discourse delivered before this Association at the late celebration of its Anniversary."

"Resolved, That the Corresponding Secretary be requested to communicate the above resolution to Dr. Channing, and to request from him, on the part of the Society, a copy of his Discourse, to be deposited in its archives."

A. SIDNEY DOANE, *Cor. Sec'y.*

DR. CHANNING is happy to acknowledge the liberality with which the "New-York Physicians' Society" have received a Discourse so much at variance with the prevailing opinions of its members, and will cheerfully place at their disposal the copy requested, on receiving it from the publishers, to whom the manuscript is about to be committed.

To A. SIDNEY DOANE, M. D.,

Cor. Sec. "New-York Physicians' Society."

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1839,

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✍ Ir, in questions of science, the sole purpose of discussion is the establishment of truth, to restrict the one, is virtually to embarrass the progress of the other. Yet, not a few, alleging the incompetency of a public tribunal for the discussion of questions touching Medical science, would confine such discussion strictly within the masonic precincts of the profession itself. Is it not quite time, in an enlightened community, that this mystification, so unworthy of philosophical medicine, be abolished, and that "principles demonstrable to public intelligence" take its place? The Positive Sciences have never shrunk from public scrutiny. No sooner had Chemistry renounced the dreams of Alchemy, than, fearless of the public gaze, she abandoned her hiding places, and stood forth in the broad light of science. Medicine will emulate the example so soon as her scientific claims may bear examination.

The views submitted to the public in the following Discourse, invite philosophical discussion; and if thus proved untenable, no one will welcome their refutation more cordially than their author. In this procedure, however, as none will deny the justice of the maxim, "*Si judicas cognosce*"—all must concede that "the FACTS of Nature, not the theories of man, are the only infallible tests of the verity of alleged discoveries."

W. C.

DISCOURSE.

MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY:

WE are assembled to celebrate the first anniversary of our union. A year has now elapsed since the adoption of our constitution, associating us for objects, the simple enunciation of which, indicates their importance. Summarily expressed, they are—*The promotion of the medical sciences ; the elevation of medical ethics ; the encouragement of professional merit, in opposition to sinister influences ; and the cultivation of a spirit of benevolence and friendship among members of a liberal profession.* These, gentlemen, are the objects which we have pledged our individual and united efforts to sustain. We feel that they are worthy of our cordial co-operation ; for in their scope, they embrace much that we prize as men, and all that we value as physicians. Collaborators of the wise and good of every clime, we would identify our aims with the great cause of Social Progress, to which the light of science is as “the pillar of fire by night.” Yes ! we believe that among the benefactors of their race should be enrolled every legitimate son of Hippocrates, who,

loving his profession as a liberal art, and vigilantly guarding its sanctity from all that would profane it, so devotes his life to its preferment that the world may feel its beauty through the blessings it diffuses.

With views thus elevated, would we dedicate our associated efforts to the objects set before us. These objects have one general import. It is, to raise the moral and intellectual standard of our profession, until Medicine, instead of limping in the rear of the army of science, shall take her place in the van-guard, there, to win for herself the laurels of a world's benedictions. This, then, is our distinguished mission. This is the sacred trust committed to the followers of *Æsculapius*. And if their eyes will not be closed, in this age of illumination; if their minds submit to no chains, in this age of freedom; if indeed, they prove not recreant to the faith they profess, the day cannot be distant, when this trust shall be fulfilled—this mission literally accomplished.

In behalf of a cause so full of promise to the hopes of philanthropy, the limits usually allotted to a discourse, might be not unprofitably occupied in sketching the influential relations of the physician with science, with sickness, with bereavement, with all the absorbing interests of society; and in deducing from these multiplied relations, his comprehensive sphere of duty, and the magnanimous incentives which impel its performance. We might hold up for our emulation the eloquent examples of those "who," to borrow the language of a medical philosopher, "not satisfied with doing good themselves, have exerted all the influence of their ministry to inspire a love of it in others; who, not content with being endowed themselves with the true principles of wisdom, have endeavored, through the intimacy with which they were favored, to extend all useful truths; and who,

when it became their duty, have not hesitated to face persecution, danger, contagion and death." But, interesting as the contemplation of professional life is, in the detail of its duties, its motives, its trials and its rewards, our present purpose precludes all save incidental allusion to this attractive theme. Nor will it permit us more than to touch upon a subject, which deservedly fills no inconsiderable place in the medical mind, and which is now drawing upon it the scrutiny of the most searching intellects. We allude to the subject of medical education.

We are not insensible to the vital importance of a thorough system of education to every hope of substantial improvement in medical science. And we are by no means confident that any, even the best of the systems that civilization has yet furnished, respond as they should do to the legitimate claims which Humanity and Science are every where repeating to the medical profession. For, we are among those who believe that education, from the period of lisping infancy to the maturity of manhood, whether administered through the eloquent birch of the common school, or the eloquent lecture of the learned professor, needs reform. With both these favorite channels we have long been familiar, and have fondly flattered ourselves that through them, the fair fields of science and intellect were abundantly watered from the fountain of Truth. Nay, more—we have listened to their praises in oratory and in song, until we have fain believed that ours was the favored land where alone, the sun of education, shining beneficently for the rich and the poor, had attained a meridian brightness. And who, think you, has presumptuously intruded upon this delicious dream? Who has rudely broken the spell of this cherished delusion? It is no other than Frederick William, of Prussia, proudly point-

ing to dominions where Freedom's accents may not be whispered, and yet, where the children of the meanest of his subjects are rejoicing in an illumination which reduces the splendor of our boasted luminary to that of a satellite. Yes!—let us blush while we confess it,—a voice from Prussia, re-echoed by France, first opened our ears to the demands of the people; and we are at length opening our eyes to the evils which nineteen-twentieths of our whole population have too long endured, from the incompetent instruction of our common schools; and now, the great movement which has been commenced, aims at nothing less than a radical reformation in the education of their teachers themselves. Whether the matter and the methods of instruction, in the higher departments of education, if submitted to the crucible of rigid analysis, would yield more fine gold than those of the minor institutions, and whether they call for measures of reform equally radical, are questions too general for our present discussion. On one point, however, there can be no division of opinion—it is this: As reformations never originate within institutions where error and abuse are rife, but from the sufferings of those without, whatever reform Medical Education may need, must receive its first impulse from the imperative demands of the age; or, what is equivalent under a government like ours, from the omnipotent cry of the people, interpreted, sustained and enforced by the profession at large; for, to us, in such an emergency, they naturally and confidently look for counsel and support. Let us, therefore, rejoice in “the signs of the times;” for they announce that a spirit is awakening, in this home of free institutions, which, in giving audience to the importunities of the age, in concentrating the philanthropy, the intelligence and influence of the profession, to meet its just requisitions, will,

it is to be hoped, commence a movement for Medicine, which may prove as effective in its regenerating power, as that so auspiciously undertaken for Education in common schools.

To aid in arousing this spirit in the profession—to encourage, collect and harmonize its contributions towards a movement so “devoutly to be wished”—virtually express the great design of our organization; and to advance this design, is the leading object of our discourse. In carrying out this object, we shall base our remarks upon what we have denominated “the legitimate claims which Humanity and Science are every where repeating to the medical profession.” And if, in urging these claims, it be necessary at times to speak freely of the acknowledged deficiencies of our art as it is too generally taught and practised, it is because, in the spirit of its own benign principles, we would if possible, have the disease under which it languishes, detected, that the remedies may be found and applied, which promise to develop in it the health, the vigor and beauty, for which the native elements of its constitution were unquestionably designed. Furthermore—our subject is of so comprehensive a nature, it includes so wide a sphere of obligation, that we are compelled to confine our attention to the *intellectual* duties of the profession; and even thus narrowed, our field is too extended for more than a mere outline, on this occasion.

To preserve and to restore health—in other words, to avert disease, and to remove it in a manner the most prompt, the most safe, the most gentle, and the most durable, is the great end of medicine as an Art—“a term,” says Sir Gilbert Blanc, “the import of which implies the adaptation of means to ends.” The means of medicine, or the *materia medica*, should in-

clude all moral and physical agents, whose positive or negative powers over the functions of the animal economy, are within the reach, and subject to the control of human intelligence. A question of the deepest import, here presents itself. How is human intelligence to compass such a knowledge of disease to be removed, and of agents at our disposal, as to adapt these means so skilfully to the desired end, that its attainment may reasonably be anticipated? To this question, there is but one satisfactory answer. It is, solely through exact observation, analysis and classification of the phenomena of animal life in health and in disease, and a like observation, analysis and classification, of the changes induced in these phenomena when subjected to the modifying powers of the agents under our control—in a word, through the rational application of an enlightened Experience.

Such is the end, such are the means, and such the exactions of the art we profess. Well may we exclaim, with the father of medicine—“*Vita brevis ; ars vero longa ; tempus autem acutum ; experimentum fallax ; judicium difficile !*” for, it needs no seer to inform us that the study of phenomena so complicate, so evanescent and so infinitely diversified, must of necessity be worse than fruitless, excepting under the light and guidance of that Philosophy which “broke the spell of the mighty enchanter of Stagira,” emancipated human reason, and gave birth to science. We repeat—he alone can hope to thread the mazy labyrinth of life’s phenomena, who is furnished with the single clew, which, for the deliverance of an infatuated world, the genius of a Bacon has disclosed. Yet, again and again, we proclaim it—he who aspires to triumph where the proudest intellects of twenty centuries have quailed, must first bow down, and drink deep at the spring

of that Philosophy which takes its humble source from the elementary axiom of all human science, that "MAN, THE SERVANT AND INTERPRETER OF NATURE, UNDERSTANDS AND REDUCES TO PRACTICE, JUST SO MUCH AS HE HAS ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED OF NATURE'S LAWS; MORE, HE CAN NEITHER KNOW NOR ACHIEVE."

We have here indicated, the first great claim of Humanity and Science on the medical profession; a claim so imperative, that since the birth of Inductive Philosophy, they have never ceased to ring it in our ears. Their demand is nothing less than that whosoever would assume the administration of an art which has to do with the delicate machinery of life, shall be possessed of this only master-key to the laws of its mysterious movements.—Is the claim legitimate? Who, of the whole profession if here assembled, would have the hardihood to hazard his reputation on its public protest? And if its justice is undeniable, how has it been met? Let the records of theoretical and practical medicine of more than two hundred years, answer the question. Do they attest the vivifying presence of Nature's philosophy pervading medical education? or, are their pages fraught with practical denials of the radical principle of this philosophy, just now quoted? Is practical medicine established on the broad principles, the immoveable basis of a science? or is it avowedly, at best, a mystical, and often merely a conjectural Art? Who of us, perusing its text-books in the clear light of Baconian analysis, has not grieved as he every where recognised the legitimate fruits of the magisterial teaching of the past? That teaching (would that it would were actually past!) which the lamented Godman so vividly depicted, when, mourning over the delinquencies of medicine, and holding them up as beacons to his class, with the frankness of that philosophy which ani-

mated the whole man, he thus poured forth his indignant spirit : " It was almost sacrilege to differ in opinion from the popular leader, whose dogmatical or fanciful absurdities, clothed in all the pomp of words, usurped the place of fact, and truth, and nature." " From the time of Hippocrates," continues this pre-eminent professor, " to the days of Rush," (and alas ! we may now add, to the days of Broussais,) " every leader of medical opinion has attempted to establish a theory of fever. Of the value of these theories, the world has had melancholy experience in their rapid succession, decline and oblivion."

" How happens it," writes that distinguished prelate, Bishop Warburton, " that in the definitions of man, *reason* is always made *essential* to him? Nobody ever thought of making *goodness* so ; and yet it is certain, there are as few reasonable men as there are good. To tell you my mind, I think man might be as properly defined *an animal to whom a sword is essential*, as *one to whom reason is essential*. For there are as few that *can*, and yet fewer that *dare*, use the one as the other." A remark so sweeping were a bitter reproach even to the long night of peripatetic despotism. But, two centuries after the star of Bacon harbingered the dawn, can it be, that civilized society is still open to an imputation so humbling to our race? Even conceding to this pungent satirist the general truth of his sarcasm, surely, so acute, so discriminating an observer of man, must have singled out at least one favored class, on whose bucklers his cruel shaft might fall pointless. He has excepted none : he has even defied the armor of that profession of which himself was so bright an ornament. Then must ours also, equally unprotected, receive his venomous arrow to our bosoms, writhe as we may under its merciless infliction.—

But the heart is sickened at a retrospect so humiliating to our pride as physicians, so chilling to our hopes as men ; and it turns instinctively to views more grateful and more cheering, inviting our attention.

Before relinquishing, however, our leading topic, we crave your attention to a few suggestions too often overlooked ; for they strike us as not unimportant, in elucidating the exact requisitions of that philosophy without whose aid the medical practitioner is doomed to a life of empiricism, and the healing art for ever precluded the dignity of a science.

It is an observation which time is constantly verifying, that "History is philosophy teaching by example." The history of man is but a paraphrase of the lessons of philosophy, and the history of individual man, a prototype of that of the race. If then, our attention be directed to any department of human progress, each is fraught with instruction, all are eloquent for human improvement.

The beginning of intellectual existence is marked by a total occupation of the senses with the detached phenomena of isolated objects. The rapid succession of novel impressions, the delight of childhood in the ever changing scenes of the panorama, afford little opportunity and less inclination for comparison ; and only when this delirium of the senses is calmed, only when the charms of simple perception no longer enthral, is juvenile reflection awakened by the innumerable relations of surrounding objects. Then, differences and similarities, antecedences and sequences, arresting attention, furnish new aliment to the craving intellect ; and classification, the intuitive resort of reason, commences in earnest the fundamental work of generalization. Now, new phenomena are observed and new comparisons instituted, new relations are discovered and new classifications established, until the super-

structure of science, in all its imposing grandeur and beautiful proportions, stands revealed to the philosopher, who, but yesterday, was "pleased with a rattle and tickled with a straw."

From this rapid sketch of intellectual development may be drawn the practical lesson, that he who would interrogate Nature in her secret recesses and rightly interpret her responses, must, with the positive integrity of purpose, the fearless simplicity of childhood, observe, compare and classify. He who has the courage to follow wherever Truth may lead, must forego the vain-glorious distinctions of scholastic hypotheses, for the unassuming, self-denying aims of a pure philosophy—the patient investigation of phenomena in their manifold relations, and the simple enunciation of these in comprehensive formulæ, or general laws.

Lord Bacon compares the philosophy of nature to "a vast pyramid which ought to have the history of nature for its basis," and those who would construct it of abstract speculations, to the giants of old who would fain have scaled the heavens by piling Ossa upon Pelion and Olympus upon Ossa. "Gratuitous theories," says a distinguished commentator of Bacon, "may impose on the imagination, like the mirage of the Egyptian sands; but like this illusion, they must pass away. They may present to the eye a magnificence as gaudy and seducing as the *fata-morgana* sometimes witnessed on the coast of Calabria, in which the most beauteous landscapes, crowned with picturesque villages, superb palaces and massy towers, seem to possess a real existence. All, however, is suspended in the air, and the enchanted scene changes with the least shifting of the light or the ruffling of the sea—melting away like a dream of the night. So must vanish at last all systems of philosophy and science that are not

founded on the solid basis of that *Induction* which it is the design of the *Novum Organum* to explain."

In the spirit of this Induction, let us go a step further—and, paradoxical as it may seem, we shall be convinced that the reiterated examples of Historical phenomena are the **very** elements of a sound Philosophy ; that not only its basis, but the whole fabric, is composed exclusively of Historical materials, which Science has selected and wrought into enduring forms of beauty and usefulness.

In what consists the process of generalization, but in classifying particulars under a compendious expression of general characteristics ? What is a philosophical theory divested of all hypothesis, but a concise enunciation of the known facts on which it rests ? And what is that which we entitle—a law of Nature ? Is it, as generally conceived, an abstract, sovereign rule, of Divine authority, prescribed to her agency before God said—"Let there be light ?" Or is it only a syncretical epitome of Nature's operations such as human assiduity has discovered, and human ingenuity has classified, and human phraseology has announced ?

On this subject, there is a prevalent error pervading even the ranks of science. Men are accustomed to view a scientific theory, conventionally stamped "a law of Nature," as an original principle established by the fiat of Omnipotence ; and he who has the hardihood to examine its validity, is charged with profanely questioning the order of Nature itself. It was for crimes like this that Roger Bacon, in the thirteenth century, was excommunicated by the Pope and imprisoned ten years, accused of dealings with the devil. At the same period, professors of philosophy in some of the universities of Europe, were bound by an oath to follow no other guide than Aristotle. The more recent examples of the same spirit, in

the London college of physicians, denouncing Harvey and Jenner, are familiar to all.

The truth is that a theory may be overturned, though every fact from which it emanated were incontrovertible. The facts are Nature's—the theory under which they are arranged, is man's ; and if every year furnished new discoveries requiring a new classification, this annual change of theories would work no transmutation in the facts already known. The Franklinian theory of electricity was, by many, received as a law of Nature. The French theory of two distinct fluids, equally sustained by the uncontroverted facts, proved that Nature had not yet assumed the responsibility of either. "There is a wide difference," says Bacon, "between the *idols* of the human mind and the *ideas* of the Divine mind."

Let us not be misunderstood. We object not to the phrase—Laws of Nature ; but we would sedulously guard against the delusion to which the mind unconsciously yields, of giving to human constructions of Nature's whispered intimations, the force and authority of her audible, unambiguous revelations themselves. While on the one hand it is maintained, that the true elements of the Philosophy of nature are identically those of the History of nature, distinguished simply by scientific arrangement ; on the other it must be conceded, that the facts of nature, not the theories of man, are the only infallible tests of the verity of alleged discoveries. Thus, to contradict past experience, is an indubitable mark of fallacy ; to go beyond it, is the very essence of genuine discovery.

We here close the first general division of our subject, with a paragraph from a late publication, expressing views too german to our purpose to be omitted ; views which, if not recommended by their novelty, will yet bear frequent repetition. "There is no department of inquiry," says this

popular writer, "in which it is not full as easy to miss truth as to find it, even when the materials from which truth is to be drawn are actually present to our senses. A child does not catch a gold-fish in water, at first trial, however good his eyes may be, and however clear the water; knowledge and method are necessary to enable him to take what is actually before his eyes and under his hand. So it is with all who fish in a strange element for the truth which is living and moving there: the powers of observation must be trained, and habits of method in arranging the materials presented to the eye must be acquired, before the student possesses the requisites for understanding what he contemplates."

Our object will have been attained, if the attention of the profession be awakened to the truth, that Inductive Philosophy is the truly vivifying principle of a genuine medical education; and if, through other and more efficient collaborators in this cause, the conviction at length obtain, that without this seminal principle of vitality, a "medical license to practise," is little better than a legal license to destroy.

The second great claim of Humanity and Science on our profession, is almost too obvious to require explicit statement. It is that, under the pure light and sole guidance of Nature's philosophy, we minutely investigate the phenomena of life, psychological and corporeal, as manifested in health, as manifested in disease, and as modified by the moral and physical agents subject to our control. In a word, they imperatively demand of us a rigid application of the principles of Inductive Philosophy to the study of the laws of Life in its most comprehensive signification.

The legitimacy of this claim, like the first, is not to be questioned; and how it has been answered is equally clear,

from the well known fact, that to this day, we have no received science in medicine, whose province it is to embody and teach the laws of physiological and psychological life.

Man is a unit ;—and however subservient the functions of the body to the nobler attributes of the soul, it is not to be contested that, while united, they are subject to one harmonious code of laws governing alike the psychological, the physiological, and the pathological, in every condition in which life is exhibited. “What God has joined together, let not man put asunder !” is a command, the violation of which, in reference to the phenomena of man’s nature, has been visited with consequences the most disastrous. To its influence on medicine may we not trace, in a great measure, the melancholy condition of our art already referred to ? Have we not as a profession, hitherto misapprehended the magnitude of the mission with which we have been intrusted ? Instead of embracing in its exalted aims the laws of the whole man, we have been insensible of our high prerogative. Surrendering to others the study of his nobler nature, we have contented ourselves with his physical, as if forgetful that we are almost daily called to “administer to a mind diseased.”

Moreover, to whom have we thus tamely surrendered this noblest portion of our legitimate domain ? To metaphysical and ethical inquirers, who, ignorant of human organization and its physiological functions, and still more, of the instructive phenomena, psychological and corporeal, occurring under the influence of disease, have pursued their speculations almost in darkness. Destitute of these important guides, they could hardly, by any possibility, have discovered for us the laws of moral and intellectual man. On the other hand, confining our investigations to mere physical phenomena,

we have attempted in vain to establish the foundations of scientific medicine upon the limited views disclosed by anatomy and physiology ; the first relating to corporeal structure, and the last, as an eminent physiologist defines it, "restricted to that branch of science which treats of the functions of the living animal body, and of the powers by which those functions are exercised," as "the purely intellectual do not properly fall within the province of the physiologist."

And what have been the positive consequences of this unnatural severance of phenomena which Nature has indissolubly united ? The unavoidable consequences of false induction. While on the one hand, the investigations of the physiologist, shut out from the light which psychological phenomena had shed around him, could not but too frequently generate the dismal forms of Materialism ; on the other, those of the psychologist, alike unilluminated, have been as naturally prolific of the wildest dreams of Idealism ; man has been arrayed against man with the fanatical virulence of futile controversy, the claims of Inductive Philosophy have been forgotten, and the laws of life's phenomena, so important to the cause of social progress, so essential to scientific medicine, are yet unrevealed.

And what, forsooth, is the argument usually advanced to deter us from this vital inquiry ? "The facts of our science," said the learned professor of *materia medica* of the University of Pennsylvania, in a recent lecture to his class, "are yet too limited to enable us to form a general theory of medicine upon the only true foundation—that of strict induction."—What had been the feelings of Bacon could he have anticipated this lamentable confession, from such a source, more than two hundred years after his departure ?—"How is it possible," continued the professor, "for us to draw from

our knowledge of the human system, a doctrine explanatory of all its morbid actions, when we are almost wholly in the dark as to the nervous functions, and, of the principle of life itself, know scarcely more than its existence? We might as well attempt to form an accurate map of a country from a knowledge of a few prominent points, while ignorant alike of its boundaries and its interior. Yet, so presumptuous is man, that he frequently undertakes the impossible task. With intellectual powers, which, in comparison with the object, are infinitely feeble, he strives to penetrate the secret counsels of Almighty wisdom."—How is it possible, we would ask this able professor, that we prescribe scientifically to our patients, if, as he avows, "we are almost wholly in the dark as to the nervous functions?" especially, as he well knows that every medicine must exert its peculiar action on these functions, to modify any animal function whatever. And why are we thus "in the dark" as to the functions of the nervous system; but because the psychological phenomena—phenomena associated with this system only, and the most strikingly demonstrative of its functions—have been irrationally excluded from the studies of the physiologist?

But, what is the substance of the argument so imposingly presented by one of the distinguished teachers of our country? Stripped of its subtlety it is simply this: because life's *essence* is inscrutable, therefore its laws are "past finding out;" and hence, it is adroitly inferred, that he who "undertakes the impossible task," would fain "penetrate the secret counsels of Almighty wisdom."—Was such the reasoning of Newton? When in the fleeting hues of the "bow of promise" he read the laws of vision, had the subtle essence of light submitted to his grasp? Or, when he spanned the

heavens, and traced through limitless space the predestined march of a universe, had he invoked the mysterious essence of gravitation to wing him for his empyrean flight?—Was the essence of the electric spark determined, when the genius of our Franklin disarmed the bolt of heaven?—Or the essence of the magnet discovered, before commerce could explore unmeasured oceans and found new empires for Liberty?—Experimental philosophy, aware that names and forms, archetypes and essences, phantasmata and substrata, are inherent prerogatives of Aristotelian visionaries, devotes herself exclusively to the study of phenomena and the laws which they obey; and but for the almost universal neglect in medicine, of this obvious truth, the laws of life's phenomena had been long since scientifically established.

That the universe abounds in mysteries exciting only the barren wonder of the desponding observer, stimulates the philosophical inquirer to earnest and untiring research. Aware that the investigation of the laws regulating the functions of the animal economy, ushers him into the very presence of Nature's arcana, he feels that if consecrated to the worship of Truth, and realizing the responsibilities of his high vocation, he be found worthy to lift the veil, the revelations of a moment may assume an importance to be estimated only by the great interests of humanity which they involve.

Until the dawning of that philosophy whose light alone could penetrate the recesses of nature where reign the laws of life, Medicine, in listening to the cry of suffering Humanity, precluded all compunctious visitings by proffering the uncertain aid of visionary speculation and unreasoning experience. But now, when the hallowed rights of emancipated intellect have been asserted, and Science has risen echoing Humanity's appeal and tendering her services to medi-

cine, Conscience will no longer be appeased. Affirming the claims of Humanity and Science, her uncompromising demand of us now is, that medicine be established upon its true basis, the immutable laws of life.

This investigation, therefore, momentous as it is to all, has claims on the medical practitioner of paramount import. Engaged in a profession of fearful responsibilities, deriving its first principles from the phenomena of life, and depending on a knowledge of their laws for the only scientific exercise of its arduous duties, the physician cannot but feel, that if in the temple of Nature, there be a shrine appropriately dedicated to *Æsculapius*, it is this. And now, when a band of his professed disciples have met to do honor to the anniversary of their union, what more fit occasion than this to mingle our votive offerings, and while listening to the mystic responses of the oracle, strive to make this union conducive to their interpretation?

Every new position from which the phenomena of vitality are viewed, serves to disclose new relations, to point out new classifications, and to disclose more clearly the harmony of the laws under which they are evolved. With a view to such a position, let us begin with reducing our ideas of life and its phenomena to simple and definite elements.

By the term, *phenomenon*, we would be understood any manifest change, perceptible in the corporeal or psychological relations of created existences. The word, *life*, in common parlance, is used almost indiscriminately, to signify an active principle, a certain manifestation, and a mere condition of existence. In a philosophical scrutiny of the laws of life, its signification must be restricted to the principle manifesting itself through perceptibly active changes in the relations of organized beings. Thus the elementary characteristics of

the phenomena through which alone the presence of the vital principle is demonstrated, are organization and activity. "Life," says Lawrence, "presupposes organization, as the movements of a watch, presuppose the wheels, levers, and other mechanism of the instrument."

These analytical definitions premised, we would call attention to the fact, universal in animated nature, that Exercise, within normal or prescribed limits, is absolutely indispensable to the development and vigor of each and every function of the animal economy; and though the limits prescribed are not clearly defined, they are undoubtedly transcended whenever, by reason of exercise, the vigor of any function, after normal rest, continues impaired. In this fundamental truth, that exercise is Nature's indispensable agent in her work of developing and confirming the vital forces—an agent, within conservative limits, uniformly invigorating, and beyond these limits, as uniformly enfeebling every function or force of animal life—in this universal truth, we apprehend, lies the germ of a great principle, which, with your indulgence, it shall now be our province, in a measure, to unfold.

And first, let us inquire, what does the very idea of exercise in any animal function, imply? Can such exercise be imposed but through labor to be performed, difficulties or obstacles to be overcome, resistance or opposition to the accomplishment of the purpose for which the function was designed? If not, and if exercise be essential, is it not incontrovertible, that to these adverse or opposing forces, every function is alike indebted for its earliest, for its latest, for its every manifestation of existence? Illustrations of this position, repeated on every page of animal history, might be multiplied almost without limitation. A few only can here be introduced.

1. In the development of every muscular power of the animal frame, the indispensable agency of opposing forces is too clearly evinced to admit of a cavil. Had the child ever learned to walk, or the bird to fly, if the force of gravity had not lent its aid to the evolution of these powers?—powers suddenly annulled, by either the entire suspension or the excessive accumulation of this force. The Herculean strength incidental to athletic pursuits, points to the same principle. And among the less palpable exhibitions of muscular energy, it can hardly be doubted, that even in the earliest of all discernible functions of animal life, the embryo heart, a mere *punctum saliens*, had never acquired vigor for the necessities of subsequent existence, had not its incipient pulsations encountered the resistance of opposing forces.

2. If we turn to functions more occult, they speak the same language. Could the eye, admirably adapted, as it is, to fulfil the design of its beautiful mechanism, ever be taught the secret of its latent powers, or when taught, retain it, deprived of the stimulus of its appropriate element?—an element too, the intensity of whose flash can paralyze these powers for ever. Is the ear, exquisitely organized as it is, less dependent for a knowledge of its uses, on the incitement of a force equally fitted to destroy? And in the unfolding and perfecting of the other senses, is not this principle in each reiterated? Moreover, by what means are the vital forces fortified against the extremes of the torrid and frigid zones, the effluvia of the marsh, and the parching winds of the desert? How are they unscathed amid “the pestilence walking in darkness?” How confront the noon-day destroyer whose touch is death? Is it not by acclimating, inuring, or confirming these forces, by *gradual* exposure to agents otherwise destructive?

3. The psychological history of man enforces the same lesson. From the period at which its phenomena first came under observation, (till which, hereditary, organic and other unappreciable influences have borne sway,) up to the period of maturity, every intellectual faculty, every moral sentiment, every passion of his nature, is expressed more or less vividly, in the ratio of its active exercise, the instrument of forces opposing within established limits. Is the world often astonished by a display of transcendent talent, in men, the brightness of whose horizon adversity has never shaded? How many of the master spirits who have filled a place in the history of mind, have been born in obscurity and fought their way to distinction, through difficulties which nothing but intellect animated by opposition, could have overcome!—Where are seen the moral sentiments triumphing in life's great contest? Where are the principles of obligation—of justice, benevolence and truth—found in their power? Where, but among those who have felt the full force of temptation? In what scenes have the great virtues always sought a congenial soil? Have they ever attained a fruitful maturity, ever seen the light even, unless planted and nurtured amid trial and conflict?—And as for the passions, who does not know that opposition is their natural aliment? Who does not know that, deprived of this, like the ambition of the conqueror of one world pining for another, they prey upon the bosoms which warmed them into life? Does not Anger glow with more vivid intensity at every breath of hostility? And is not Pride constantly inflated by contesting rivalry? Had the miser's gold ever been the idol of his soul, but for the toils, privations and perils of its accumulation? or the temple of fame roused an aspiration, but for the

struggle to gain its giddy height? In fine, is not the poet's thought almost a truism, that

"Love, all-defying Love, who sees
No charm in trophies won with ease,
Hath ever held that pearl the best,
He finds beneath the stormiest water."

Truly, through collision alone, is passion's spark elicited; and the blast which might extinguish, fans it into a flame. But we cannot now extend our illustrations.

The data which have been adduced, it is believed, establish the position that—Whenever the exigencies of the animal economy demand a more energetic activity of special functions or forces, Nature, (not less skilful in choosing her means than in graduating their power to the vigor of constitutional reaction,) invariably employs, within limits normally conservative, agents specifically adverse to the functions or forces requiring her aid.

It follows, that of the myriads of active agents by which animal life is invested, none is essentially inimical; for none proves hostile but through an excessive exhibition of its power; none is injurious, but in transcending the limits beyond which the vital forces necessarily succumb—the normal limits of conservative reaction. An inference fraught with instruction, pointing as it does to important practical bearings of the great law of animal existence which Nature has so unequivocally proclaimed—

CONTRARIA CONTRARIIS CORROBORANTUR.

A sketch of the deductions which might be traced from this law of vitality—a mere glance at its bearings upon the received doctrines of philosophy, upon the principles of

ethical and intellectual science, of education, of government, of theology, of medicine, &c., would lead us into fields of discussion, not only foreign to our purpose, but requiring volumes to compass ; for its applications are as manifold as the conditions and interests of life are multiform. Waving, therefore, other topics, the occasion limits us to a brief consideration of the monitions of this law, in the correlative conditions of health and disease.

Here we are naturally introduced to the third and last great claim of Humanity and Science which we have to urge upon the votaries of our art. They exact of us, that in its administration, we constantly look to the laws of life established by rigid induction, as the supreme, the sole authority for our government ; that, neither usurping ourselves, nor countenancing the usurpations of others, but firmly maintaining our fealty "through good report and through evil report," we strictly observe these laws, as the only revelation of Nature's decalogue of which man may rationally avail himself, for the preservation of health and the removal of disease.

The justice of this claim is scarcely more obvious, than that the records of practical medicine are little else than the records of its denial. Is this allegation contested ? We challenge the objector to the proof : we challenge him to produce from the history of medicine down to the present age, a concordant code of laws, or even a single law of general application, which physicians of repute have received as having universal authority in the administration of the healing art. But, to save our objector the labor of research so fruitless, we refer to testimony which must satisfy the most scrupulous. He doubtless has heard the name of Cabanis, whom France has

ranked among the first of her medical philosophers ; and perhaps he has read his celebrated " Essay on the Certainty of Medicine," published at the close of the last century. In this Essay, confessedly the ablest vindication of its claims to confidence which our art can boast, the philosopher, with all his devotion to medicine, attests his still greater devotion to truth, in the following ingenuous admissions. " We are continually obliged to admit exceptions to those rules which were thought adequate for our guidance. We discover nothing fixed and invariable in their application, or in the plans they should furnish us for our conduct. With the exception, therefore, of some principles, which, in consequence of their very general nature, are little calculated to direct us in the detail of every particular circumstance, it seems as if the theoretical knowledge of a physician was reduced to nothing at the bedside of the sick, and that his practical skill resides in a sort of instinctive acuteness, improved by habit and experience." Alas! for the "certainty of medicine," if it must depend on the "instinctive acuteness" of a race so inferior in this respect to the brute creation, so superior in the nobler prerogative of reason. But we will not anticipate the inference which a mind so disciplined as that of Cabanis could not but foresee, and, embarrassing as it was to the task he had undertaken, could not but encounter. Interrogatively, he presents it thus fairly: "Now, if in the mathematical sciences, the slightest deviation from the accurate construction and employment of rules, leads us inevitably to the most incorrect results, shall we ever be enabled to avoid errors in an art, the successes of which depend exclusively on the acuteness of our organs, and in which the most happy views are less the effects of reasoning than of inspiration?"—His answer to this plain question needs no commentary of ours,

for it speaks volumes. "This, confessedly, would appear difficult, though not impossible ; or at least, such is my candid opinion."—Feeling as we do, that any thing which we can add, would but weaken the impression of testimony so explicit and so entirely above the reach of cavil, we resume our subject.

Perfect health of the animal economy, implies perfect conformity with the laws under which its forces, in harmonious activity, promptly respond to every exigency of its nature. Disease, like every suffering to which humanity is subject, is Nature's warning revelation, her benignant penalty of violated law. It is the condition in which, through lesion of sensation, of motion or of structure, the equilibrium of the vital forces is disturbed—a condition wherein we are made to feel the importance of the "*mens sana in corpore sano*" of Horace, for the exigencies of a nature illimitable in its aspirations, boundless in its prospects. The complete development, then, of both the psychological and corporeal forces maintained in harmony with the laws of life, constitutes the *beau-ideal* of health, the ultimate aim of medical science.

We have seen that "of the myriads of active agents by which animal life is invested, none proves hostile but through an excessive exhibition of its power ;" and consequently that "within limits normally conservative," every agent is actively contributing its quota to that perfect development, without which, the ends of existence are but inadequately fulfilled. If it be now recollected that the vital laws control supremely, not only every function of our nature, psychological and corporeal, but of necessity, every agent which may operate on either, we cannot but be struck with the infinite Beneficence which has placed man in the midst of a world subject to undeviating laws, and filled on every hand with moral, in-

tellectual and physical influences, all tending, if unperturbed, to unfold and perfect his nature, to invigorate his wavering progress, to assure the accomplishment of his high destiny. Methinks, if any contemplation of the grand, the glorious displays of Nature's operations, may touch the soul and bear it spontaneously "up to Nature's God," it is this. And if the poet with reason, exclaimed, "an undevout astronomer is mad!" what must be the condition of that mind which can find no spring of devotion in these wondrous adaptations of a *universe*, to the progressive expansion of our noblest faculties, the consummation of our dearest hopes !

" For us the winds do blow,
The earth doth rest, heaven move, and fountains flow ;
Nothing we see but means our good,
As our delight, or as our treasure ;
The whole is either our cupboard of food,
Or cabinet of pleasure."

" The stars have us to bed ;
Night draws the curtain, which the sun withdraws ;
Music and light attend our head.
All things unto our flesh are kind,
In their descent and being ; to our mind,
In their ascent and cause."

" More servants wait on man
Than he'll take notice of. In every path,
He treads down that which doth befriend him
When sickness makes him pale and wan.
Oh, mighty Love! Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him !"

We now approach a topic, at all times the most interesting to the physician, and which, in relation to the subject of our discourse, holds the place of distinction. Here, the responsibilities of the task we have assumed, press upon us with redoubled weight ; for if our general law prove unavailing in the treatment of disease, we shall have expended our labor and taxed your patience, in vain.

Practitioners of the healing art, who, in their proper vocation, are but the ministers of Nature, recognise her supremacy in every medical school having claims to Inductive Philosophy. Hence, by all such schools, however antagonistic their theories, it is a truth admitted, that in every case of disease, the legitimate aim of medication is, to render efficient aid to the *vis conservatrix naturæ*—either by obviating difficulties, or by reinforcing its sanitary efforts. For, on the vital forces, whatever the means resorted to, must we ultimately rely for the restoration of health.

In the presence of disease, therefore, the philosophical physician, rising above the region where scholastic controversies have for ages distracted the medical world, is disturbed with no speculations on its inscrutable nature and essence; but, rejecting all pathological hypotheses which, like the philosopher's stone and the elixir-vitæ of chemistry, have been the paralyzing incubus of medical science, he rests solely on demonstrable facts. Confining his attention strictly to appreciable phenomena and their inductive classification, as the only legitimate work of medical philosophy, he discerns, in these thus classified, the characteristic features of individual cases—and in each case respectively, that certain functions or forces of the living economy are specially invaded, requiring the aid of medicinal agents.

With a mind thus singly devoted to his purpose, his attention is first directed to the offending cause which excited and may continue the disturbance. This removed, he turns confidently to the Laws of Life—the formulæ under which vital phenomena, in their diversified relations, are scientifically disposed—as the only competent authority for the solution of a problem, in which, life and its relations alone are concerned. And if among these laws, he find recorded, in cha-

racters not to be mistaken, *Contraria contrariis corroborantur*—obedient to its mandate, he selects, as the means of invigorating their reaction, an agent specifically adverse to the yielding functions or forces. In other words, he prescribes the medicine which, acting pathogenetically upon an organism in health, affects in a similar manner the special functions or forces suffering under the attack. That is to say, he administers an agent which, producing in the healthy organism morbid phenomena similar to those manifest in the patient, is chosen in conformity with the well known principle, "*Similia similibus curantur*."

The energy of the agent thus selected, primarily active upon functions yielding to invasion, and hence less able to resist it, may so much the more readily transcend "the limits beyond which the vital forces necessarily succumb." And inasmuch as every agent, like exercise, is "an agent, within conservative limits, uniformly invigorating, and beyond these limits, as uniformly enfeebling every function or force of animal life" in its sphere of activity, and as the sole object of a medicinal agent so selected, is to invigorate yielding functions or forces, it follows, that only within these limits should the powers of such agent be exhibited—limits which, like those of exercise, may be competently determined by experience alone.

We must here claim the privilege for a moment, of reverting to a portion of our argument that, in passing, was necessarily left incomplete. When pursuing our inductive analysis, adducing illustrations in support of the general law of life which we have advanced, had we closely adhered to our prescribed principles, we had included in our field of induction the phenomena of life, not only "as manifested in health," but also "as manifested in disease," and "as modified

by the moral and physical agents subject to our control." But, addressing a society, the members of which acknowledge neither the Homœopathic doctrine nor the facts on which it rests, we were precluded all resort to the only authorities who have minutely and extensively investigated the simple action of medicinal agents upon the human organism, uncomplicated by the presence of disease. We have hence, been compelled to rely on illustrations familiar to all, for the demonstration of our general law, until through the authority of this law, a hearing could be obtained for the facts which the Homœopathic school have brought to light.

You are doubtless apprized that Hahnemann, the founder of this school, having by numerous experiments, established to his perfect conviction, his great principle, "*Similia similibus curantur*"—saw at a glance, that this principle could avail little, if he contented himself with simply proving the general truth it expresses, that *Agents, medicinally administered, are curative of those sufferings of the sick, which, pathogenetically administered, they generate in the healthy.* He saw that, to render it extensively availing in the treatment of disease, an entirely new science was to be created—the science of Pathogenetics—which, based on multiplied experiments upon divers ages, sexes, temperaments and constitutions, should teach what are the sufferings which each agent, singly administered, has power to generate in the healthy. Fortified in their determination by the opinions of such men as Van Helmont, Stahl, Hoffmann and Haller, and animated by a devotion which nothing but the fullest conviction of the truth and importance of their cause could have kindled—a devotion unparalleled in the history of medicine—Hahnemann and his followers, in less than fifty years, have carried this science to an extent and precision perfectly

incredible to those unacquainted with its details. Suffice it however, to say, that through its instrumentality, there have been at length accumulated upon record, thousands of well attested cases, (besides the multitude unrecorded,) demonstrating that—agents, proved in the healthy organism, specifically adverse to the functions or forces yielding in the sick, if employed within conservative limits, invigorate the reactive energy of these forces in opposition to the progress of disease.

Availing ourselves of these innumerable facts, into the details of which our limits forbid us to enter, we now confidently appeal to them, in obvious support of both the universal law of life, *Contraria contrariis corroborantur*, and its inevitable corollary, the fundamental doctrine of the Homœopathic school, "*Similia similibus curantur*"—and we cannot but feel that, in view of the wide extension of our induction, the argument demonstrative of these great principles, has acquired a force which absolute scepticism alone can resist.

We have thus, gentlemen, introduced, as we trust, legitimately to your respectful consideration, a subject which, until recently in this country, has been deemed too insignificant for the grave reflection of a medical society: a subject, which, it must be confessed, has but too often been presented to the profession, either standing aloof from all relations with science, or covered with the opprobrium which infatuated zeal and ignorant misrepresentation have jointly heaped upon it. We should therefore do injustice to convictions confirmed by the experience of years, could we forego the present opportunity to disabuse the professional mind of certain errors, in the circumstances referred to, perhaps unavoidable. That we may be assured, however, of your patient attention to the

few observations which we have to offer upon these misconceptions—that indeed, you may, in some degree, participate in our estimate of the importance of this subject,—we shall first adduce for your satisfaction, citations from two late publications not open to the suspicion of *ex parte* testimony.

The first of these publications, we regret to say, is the only one from our opponents on this side of the Atlantic, that has fallen into our hands, which a Homœopathist who realizes the dignity of science and the sacred nature of the cause he advocates, could publicly notice without a violation of self-respect. This remark is but a just tribute to the late President of the New-York State Medical Society,* and to the general spirit of his “Annual Address” before that body in February last, on what he terms, “The Homœopathic System of Medicine.” In this address, adverting to the reception Homœopathy meets with from physicians, he says—

“Generally speaking, they have at once pronounced the whole subject absurd—a delusion—or a gross imposition upon public credulity. Now, is this the proper mode of treating it? Is it philosophical to call any thing absurd, professing to be founded on observation and experiment? If it be false, it should be proved to be so, by showing that facts do not warrant the premises, or the deductions drawn from them.”

“It is possible, that the Homœopathic reasoning may be erroneous—it is possible that the medicines may act as specifics, like the vaccine virus, and that the mode of action may be altogether inexplicable, in the present state of our knowledge. We are therefore more interested in determining the correctness of the alleged facts, than in that of the theory offered to explain them. Many of these facts are of such a kind as admit of easy examination—and can be readily proved or refuted.”

“Whether Homœopathy be true or not, it is entitled to have its claims fairly investigated. The object of the profession is to ascertain the truth; and if it should turn out that in any disease, the Homœopathic remedies are more efficacious than those known to the ordinary system, they ought unquestionably to be used. It will not do for the

* Professor James M'Naughton.

members of the profession to wrap themselves up in their dignity, and to call the new system absurd, without further inquiry. The history of the profession presents many lamentable instances of the obstinacy with which errors have been clung to, and improvements resisted."

And this distinguished professor of our State University concludes this train of thought, by suggesting to the State Medical Society, as a means of improving Medical Science, "the propriety of making the comparative merits of Allopathy and Homœopathy the subject of a prize dissertation." Investigation, commenced in such a spirit cannot but be pursued; and in separating fact from fiction, it must eventually extricate a mind like this, from the many embarrassments of a field so novel, under which it now evidently labors.

The other publication to which we would refer, is entitled "Curiosities of Medical Experience," by Dr. Millingen, an eminent surgeon of the British army—a work which has been thought worthy of a place in the "Select Medical Library," now in the course of publication in Philadelphia. In an article upon Homœopathy, our author canvasses its claims with the severity of a critic who knows no touch-stone but experience. Cautiously discriminating between mere *dogmata* and points essential to Homœopathic doctrine, he unsparingly condemns some of the positions of Hahnemann as wholly untenable and even absurd, and thus introduces what he terms "a much more grateful and important task," viz: "to prove by the evidence of facts, supported by practical reasoning, that the art of healing is more indebted to the Homœopathic doctrines, than to any system that has hitherto been delivered in our schools."

"That the all bountiful Creator," continues our author, "in permitting, for purposes unknown to us, that mankind should be visited by so many scourges, has also scattered around us means to counteract

these evils, cannot be a matter of doubt. Instinct leads animals to find out these salutary agents, and various specifics have been discovered by man. The rudest savage is in possession of curative substances unknown to the civilized, and performs cures where learning and experience have proved of no avail. To extend the limits of specifics must be considered a most desirable step towards adding to our means of relieving disease; and in this pursuit, it is impossible to bestow too much praise on the Homœopathic observer."

Having noticed the current objections to the alleged Homœopathic cures, attributed as they are to diet, to imagination, to Nature, to any thing but the small doses, our author thus proceeds—

"But the facts I am about recording—facts which induced me, from having been one of the warmest opponents of this system, to investigate carefully its practical points—will effectually contradict all these assertions regarding the inefficacy of the Homœopathic doses, the influence of diet, or the agency of the mind; for in the following cases, in no one instance could such influences be brought into action. They were (with scarcely any exception) experiments made without the patient's knowledge, and where no time was allowed for any particular regimen. They may, moreover, be conscientiously relied upon, since they were made with a view to prove the fallacy of the Homœopathic practice. Their result, as may be perceived by the foregoing observations, by no means rendered me a convert to the absurdities of the doctrine, but fully convinced me, by the most incontestable facts, that the introduction of fractional doses will soon banish the farrago of nostrums that are now exhibited to the manifest prejudice, both of the health and the purse, of the sufferer."

Dr. Millingen here adduces in support of his views, six striking cases occurring under his own inspection, for the details of which* we must refer to his article itself, which he thus concludes—

"I could record many instances of similar results, but they would of course be foreign to this work. I trust that the few cases I have

* Vide Appendix A.

related will afford a convincing proof of the injustice, if not the unjustifiable obstinacy, of those practitioners who, refusing to submit the Homœopathic practice to a fair trial, condemn it without investigation. That this practice will be adopted by quacks and needy adventurers, there is no doubt; but Homœopathy is a science on which numerous voluminous works have been written by enlightened practitioners, whose situation in life placed them far above the necessities of speculation. Their publications are not sealed volumes, and any practitioner can also obtain the preparations they recommend. It is possible, nay, more than probable, that physicians cannot find time to commence a new course of studies, for such this investigation must prove. If this is the case, let them frankly avow their utter ignorance of the doctrine, and not denounce with merciless tyranny a practice of which they do not possess the slightest knowledge. Despite this absolute persecution that *Hahnemannism* (as this doctrine is ironically denominated) is at present enduring, every reflecting and unprejudiced person must feel convinced that, although its wild and untenable theories may not overthrow the established systems, (if any one system can be called established,) yet, its study and application bid fair to operate an important revolution in medicine. The introduction of infinitely small doses, when compared at least with the quantities formerly prescribed, is gradually creeping in. The history of medicine affords abundant proofs of the acrimony, nay, the fury, with which every new doctrine has been impugned and insulted. The same annals will also show that this spirit of intolerance has always been in the *ratio* of the truths that these doctrines tended to bring into light. From the preceding observations, no one can accuse me of having become a blind convert to Homœopathy; but I can only hope that its present vituperators will follow my example and examine the matter calmly and dispassionately, ere they proceed to pass a judgment that their vanity may lead them to consider a final sentence."

Trusting that the two examples here presented—not of liberality, (for Homœopathy needs favor from none,) but simply of that justice which ever distinguishes the philosophical from the mere sciolist, will not be the less influential because they are rare, we can now believe that you will not think a few minutes idly appropriated to the purpose just now indicated.

We flatter ourselves that in demonstrating the fundamen-

tal doctrine of Homœopathic medicine, as the necessary consequence of a universal law of animal life, we have satisfactorily proved its intimate relations with all sciences bearing upon life's great interests. It remains for us to notice some of the misconceptions which, pervading the medical mind, pass current in society as fair exhibitions of its pretensions.

And first—Homœopathy is not a Surgical science. It has never pretended with its minute doses, though it would seem to be demanded of it, to amputate a limb, to reduce a dislocation, to extract an aching tooth or a piercing thorn, to remove a deadly draught from the stomach, or any other local irritant from the organism affecting it chemically or mechanically ; though it has done more, it has often superseded the necessity of chemical and mechanical agency. Neither does it promise, more than other medical treatment, to counteract potencies overwhelming the organism beyond the power of reaction. But, passing all such cases as not within the scope of its ministry, it confines itself strictly to its legitimate province, the treatment of medical cases. As a Medical science, it views the manifestations of disease as consequences of disturbed vital action. Hence it employs agents whose *dynamical* activity, ascertained by experiment on the healthy organism, is directed upon the vital forces thus disturbed,—and because disturbed, morbidly susceptible to the influence of homogeneous or similar irritants, beyond all human appreciation. Actuated by such views and illuminated by experience, Homœopathy cannot but inculcate the employment of doses much less than heretofore administered. Still, sufficient latitude is left to the discriminating judgment of each practitioner, in adapting his doses to the varied circumstances of each individual case, so that he never transcend the limits of conservative reaction ; limits which, as

we have before remarked, experience alone is competent to determine.

Again—Homœopathy is often styled, A New System of Medicine. This, it does not claim to be ; for, a system of medicine must embrace all the important medical sciences. Now, Homœopathy came into existence not to supplant these ; not to subvert, indeed, any thing previously established ; but to supply an acknowledged, an imperative want—to complete, as it were, the arch of Scientific Medicine. So far from denying her obligations to the experience of past ages, in the very introduction of Hahnemann's Organon, its author has drawn largely upon this experience in support of his doctrine. So far from disowning the great advances which modern researches have effected in many departments of science, she frankly admits, and gladly avails herself of these essential elements of the great arch it was her province to complete—for example, the sciences of Special and General Anatomy, of Physiology and General Pathology, on the one side, and the various departments of Natural History and Chemistry, as sources of the *Materia Medica*, on the other. But, conceding even perfection to these indispensable sciences, it is manifest that without its key-stone—a scientific system of Therapeutics—the arch of the medical sciences was alike devoid of symmetry and strength. For, what could it avail to the Art of Healing, though on the one hand, every fibre and every function of the animal frame, in health and disease, were perfectly disclosed—and on the other, creation had yielded up its stores, and Chemistry had analyzed them all and recombined their elements without limits, if that science which should teach the adaptation of agents thus multiplied, to the removal of morbid action, was yet to be created ? And that it was to be created, the whole history of Medicine testifies,

All that was positively established on the subject, all that had effectually withstood the revolutions of medical opinion marking this history, consisted of a few specific medicines and a few specific practices, (for which the art was chiefly indebted to fortuitous or empirical sources,) and these not referred, but deemed irreferable to any consistent system of general principles, and of course offering no claim to the appellation of a science.

But lest we be thought to exaggerate in our representation of the absolute deficiency of *that* science without which Medicine can never be other than a conjectural art, we must appeal to testimony not to be controverted. And first, let us listen to one whose name is a monument of genius and practical research, the immortal John Hunter. Referring to the virtues of medicinal substances and their application to the counter-action of disease, he says :

“Of these virtues we know nothing definitely ; all we know is, that some are capable of altering the mode of action, others stimulating, many counter-stimulating; some even irritating and others quieting, so as to produce either a healthy disposition and action in a diseased part, or to change the disease to that action which accords with the medicine, or to quiet where there is too much action ; and our reasoning goes no further than to make a proper application of these substances, with these virtues. The difficulty is, to ascertain the connexion of substance and virtue, and to apply this in restraining or altering any diseased action ; and as that cannot be demonstrated *à priori*, it reduces the practice of medicine to experiment; and this not built upon well-determined data, but upon experience, resulting from probable data. This is not equally the case through the whole practice of medicine, for in many cases we are much more certain of a cure than in others; but still, even in them, the certainty does not arise from reasoning upon any more fixed data, than in others where the certainty of a cure is less; but it arises from a greater experience alone. It is still no more than inferring that, in what is now to be tried, there is a probable effect or good to arise in the experiment, from what has been found serviceable in similar cases. Diseases, however,

of the same specific nature, not only vary in their visible symptoms or actions, but in many of those that are invisible, arising probably from peculiarities of constitution and causes, which will make the effects of applications vary, probably almost in the same proportion; and as those varieties may not be known, so as either to adapt the specific medicine to them, or to suit the disease to the medicine, it will then be only given upon a general principle, which of course may not correspond to the peculiarities. Even in well marked specific diseases, where there is a specific remedy, we find that there are often peculiarities, which counteract the simple specific medicine.”*

Such is the testimony of Hunter; and upon this alone, we might rest our case. But the position which we would maintain—that, Therapeutics, until the rise of the Homœopathic doctrine, had never met the first requisitions, and was consequently unworthy the name of a science—is too important to be left to the testimony of a single witness, however high his authority.

In a lecture before the Royal College of Physicians, London, delivered by Dr. Paris from the chair of *Materia Medica*, we find the following concessions. This learned professor, adverting to “the extraordinary vicissitudes so eminently characteristic,” as he remarks, “of the history of *Materia Medica*,” makes use of this language.

“That such fluctuations in opinion and versatility in practice should have produced, even in the most candid and learned observers, an unfavorable impression with regard to the general efficacy of medicines, can hardly excite our astonishment, much less our indignation; nor can we be surprised to find that another portion of mankind has at once arraigned Physic as a fallacious art, or derided it as a composition of error and fraud. They ask, and it must be confessed that they ask with reason,—what pledge can be afforded them, that the boasted remedies of the present day will not, like their predecessors, fall into disrepute, and in their turn, serve only as humiliating memorials of the credulity and infatuation of the physicians who commended and pre-

* Hunter, *On the Blood, Inflammation, &c.*

scribed them?" Again, while attempting to account for these "fluctuations in opinion and versatility in practice" connected with the *Materia Medica*, he alleges that "its advancement has been continually arrested and often entirely subverted, by the caprices, prejudices, superstitions and knavery of mankind," and that "unlike the other branches of science, it is incapable of successful generalization"—and he adds the significant question, "In the progress of the history of remedies, when are we able to produce a discovery or improvement, which has been the result of that happy combination of Observation, Analogy and Experiment, which has so eminently rewarded the labors of modern science?"*

Admitting this question to have been unanswerable, as it evidently was, how happened it that it did not occur to this able professor that, amid the infinity of fictions with which the *Materia Medica* notoriously abounds, even the best established facts which are avowedly "incapable of successful generalization," can have no pretensions whatever, to the rank of a science?

In further corroboration of our position, the distinguished Girtanner says, "Our *Materia Medica* is a mere collection of fallacious observations;"† and to the same effect is the remark of the illustrious Hoffman—" *Per pauca sint remedia quorum virtutes et operationes certæ; plurima vero infida, suspecta, fallacia, ficta.*"‡

It were easy to multiply authorities to prove what the conscientious and reflecting of the profession, in every age, have perceived and often publicly lamented. We feel that the fact we are urging can hardly engage our thoughts too seriously. Indeed, we would that the attention of the whole profession were concentrated upon it, until they realize that here the citadel of Medicine is assailable, and that Humanity will never cease to reproach us with dereliction of duty, so long as we leave it thus open to attack. But for this one unprotected

* Hist. Introd. Pharm.

† Darstellung.

‡ *Medicina Rationalis.*

point, had our fortress been stormed, the heroism of its veterans defied, and its best and bravest compelled to succumb before that dread pestilence which, but yesterday, traversed the civilized globe, devastating hamlets, and cities, and kingdoms, almost unimpeded in its march? But for this indefensible condition of our ramparts, had we so often been compelled, tamely to acquiesce in the taunts and the jeers of our enemies? Or, when some fearless associate, more actively vigilant if not more sagacious than the rest, hoping to rouse us to a sense of our danger, has shouted in our ears the past delinquencies of our art, what but the received doctrine that the powers of the *Materia Medica* are "incapable of successful generalization," has deterred us from rushing to the rescue? But for this paralyzing conviction, so prevalent in our ranks, had we not long since rallied with one consent, to the one standard of medical doctrine which Nature has set up? But for this, had the plea of Brutus ever been heard in our forums, from spirits who, "not loving Cæsar less but Rome more," have been compelled to forswear their allegiance, and strike a blow for human emancipation from worse than Cæsar's bondage? Who of us did not feel his blood curdle in his veins? Whose pulse did not stand still with grief and humiliation, when, but a brief period since, an eloquent pen, well known in the cause of Medical Philosophy, held up for our contemplation the following appalling delineation of theoretical and practical medicine?

"It seems to be one of the rules of faith in our art, that every truth must be helped into belief by some persuasive fiction of the school. And I here owe it to the general reader to confess, that as far as I know, the medical profession can scarcely produce a single volume in its practical department, from the works of Hippocrates down to the last made text-book, which, by the requisitions of an exact philosophy, will not be found to contain nearly as much fiction as truth. This may

seem so severe a charge against both the pride and logic of our art, that I crave a moment of digression upon it."

"There are tests for all things. Now, a dangerous epidemic always shows the difference between the strong and the weak, the candid and the crafty, among physicians. It is equally true that the same occasion displays, even to the common observer, the real condition of their art: whether its precepts are exact or indefinite, and its practice consistent or contradictory. Upon these points, and bearing in mind that we have now in medicine the recorded science and practice of more than two thousand years,—let the reader refer to the proceedings of the medical profession, during the prevalence of the so-called 'Asiatic Cholera,' and he will find their history every where exhibiting an extraordinary picture of prefatory panic, vulgar wonder, doubt, ignorance, obtrusive vanity, plans for profit and popularity, fatal blunders, distracting contradictions, and egregious empiricism:—of twenty confounding doctors called in consultation, to mar the sagacious activity of one;—of ten thousand books upon the subject, with still an unsatisfied call for more;—of Experience fairly frightened out of all his former convictions, and of costly missions after moonshine, returning only with clouds."

"Now I do assert, that no art which has a sufficiency of truth, and the least logical precision, can ever wear a face so mournfully grotesque as this. In most of the transactions of men, there is something like mutual understanding and collective agreement, on some points at least; but the history of the Cholera, summed up from the four quarters of the earth, presents only one tumultuous Babel of opinion; and one unavailable farrago of practice. This, even the populace learned from the daily gazettes; and they hooted at us accordingly. But it is equally true, that if the inquisitive fears of the community were to bring the real state of professorial medicine to the bar of public discussion, and thus array the vanity and interests of physicians in the contest of opinion, we should find the folly and confusion scarcely less remarkable, on nearly all the other topics of our art."

"Whence comes all this? Not from exact observation, which assimilates our minds to one consenting usefulness: But from Fiction—which individualizes each of us to our own solitary conceit, or herds us into sects, for idle or mischievous contention with each other; which leads to continual imposition on the public, inasmuch as fictions, for a time, always draw more listeners than truth; which so generally gives to the mediocrity of men, and sometimes even to the palpably weak, a leading influence in our profession; and which helps the impostures of the advertising quack, who being an unavoidable product of the pretending theories of the schools, may be called, a

physician with the requisite amount of fictions, but without—respectability.”

Such is the mortifying, the melancholy picture from the easel of no less an artist, than the author of “The Philosophy of the Human Voice.”* It needs no key to explain its graphic features ; and it needs no sage to perceive that its original had never existed, but that the arch of the medical sciences was in want of its key-stone ; and it was to supply this desideratum, to give to this structure a consistency, a strength, and a beauty, which, for the first time, establish Medicine among the positive sciences, that Homœopathy has been vouchsafed to man.

Homœopathy, therefore, is not A New System of Medicine. But, as the first successful generalization of the curative powers of the *Materia Medica*, and that under one comprehensive principle, “*Similia similibus curantur*,”—it is in medicine, The Science of Therapeutics. And it is a science which, though by no means boasting of full and perfect development, claims for itself and confidently announces the principle with its practical application, through which Specific Remedies yet undiscovered, may be ultimately found for the multiplied forms of disease with which the human family is afflicted.

We might extend our remarks, obviating objections founded in erroneous views of Homœopathy. But it were incompatible with our purpose now to engage in its elaborate defence, and still more, in defence of certain opinions of its illustrious founder, adopted by some of the Homœopathic school and rejected by others equally distinguished ; opinions which are reckoned among the indispensable constituents of

* James Rush, M. D.

its faith, only by those who fail in genuine respect for the character and example of Hahnemann, forgetting as they do, the invaluable precept which has been the ruling principle of his life—"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri."

What has been offered is sufficient to place in clear light this truth—that all which is essential to the existence of Homœopathy is its great radical principle, "*Similia similibus curantur*;" and they who hope to cut off any portion of its vital nutriment, must aim their blows at this, and not idly waste their energies, as heretofore, upon the parasitic productions of misguided zeal and their own prolific imaginations. Though scarce half a century has passed since its first germination, already Homœopathy shelters under its wide spread branches, a more numerous band of devoted cultivators, than are found beneath the most venerable oaks which the whirlwinds of opinion have left in the groves of medical science. That these modernized relics of scholastic antiquity are doomed to the fate of their predecessors, and that this young and vigorous scion of Inductive Philosophy is destined to flourish until the whole family of man be made partakers of its fruits, is as certain as that the night of time-honored error must give place to the day-spring of truth. "Coming events cast their shadows before"—and may we not, on this side the Atlantic at least, consider it a harbinger of the consummation referred to, that we every where discern a great and increasing withdrawal of public confidence from what is termed "regular practice," to attach itself like a drowning man, to any straw that quackery may hold out? Has this confidence ever been, in like manner, withdrawn from the professors of Navigation or of Agriculture? And if we give to Medicine, principles equally fixed and equally

demonstrable to public intelligence, is it not self evident that from that hour, the doom of quackery is for ever sealed ?

Before our country, however, can become the theatre of events so long desired, the organization of our Medical Institutions must be reformed.* These fountains of education must be purified ; and in accordance with the spirit of our civil institutions, the principle which we have adopted as fundamental in our association, must be carried out to the fullest extent—the principle of “Free Competition in the honorable exercise of professional talent wherever exhibited, whether striving in the walks of private enterprise, or contending for the palm of public distinction.” “But,” as the writer last cited, pointedly observes, “if the patronage of chartered institutions is to be entrapped by the vulgar baits of ambition ;—if any thing in a First-of-April suit, is likely to be caught up by mistake for the succinct enrobing of science ;—if professor, First, Second and Third, is to be chosen respectively from the North, the South, and the West, merely to secure like political weight, the profitable pupilage of districts ;—if professors are to be allured into service, for the purpose, if I may use the poacher’s phrase, of crippling a rival institution ;—if one is to be chosen because he votes the right side in politics ; another because he has the support of a religious sect ; a third to prevent the desertion of an indispensable myrmidon ; and last but not least, a fourth, because his cousin’s wife is the favorite niece of an influential manager : If all this should be done, it may indeed be no more than the worldly way and means of so many other undertakings that evade their promises implied, and slip their obligatory duty. But such medical patronage can do no more

* Appendix B.

than entrench beyond all means of dislodgement, except ultimate self-destruction, the mercenary interests and manœuvring policies of the every-day ambition and ability of our art.”*

If we have not failed in our aim, it has been shown—that to secure the invaluable ends of Medicine as an art, Humanity and Science^a have been, throughout the last two centuries, importunately repeating three great claims to the medical profession.

The first of these exacts—that none be admitted to the ministry of an art professing to control the mysterious phenomena of life, unless deeply imbued with the spirit and doctrine of that Philosophy whose fundamental principle asserts that “Man, the servant and interpreter of Nature, understands and reduces to practice just so much as he has actually experienced of Nature’s laws ; more, he can neither know nor achieve.” It has been maintained that this claim,—involving as it does, the child-like integrity, the patience, the courage, the self-denial, in a word, the moral virtues of a mind which worships at no other than the shrine of Truth,—is so important, that “without this seminal principle of vitality” pervading medical education, “a medical license to practice is little better than a legal license to destroy.” It has been also maintained that, if we look to the practical evidence of the annals of medicine, we shall be convinced that, down to the present age, this claim has been, with few exceptions, virtually disregarded by the distinguished teachers of our art.

Under the second general division of our subject, it has been urged that Humanity and Science unitedly and “im-

* Appendix C.

peratively demand of us a rigid application of the principles of Inductive Philosophy to the study of the laws of life :” That, although in medicine there is no science recognised “ whose province it is to embody and teach the laws of physiological and psychological life,” yet, of the many fields of Nature open to scientific research, none promises to the Medical Philosopher a harvest so rich as is offered to him in the investigation of these laws of life : That a truly Baconian spirit, regardless of all save ascertained phenomena inductively classified, cannot fail, in a field where the very basis of philosophical medicine must be sought, to reap fruits more grateful, more invigorating, more abundant, and more lasting, than have been produced by all the speculations which, from time immemorial, have dazzled the world.

Anxiously cherishing this spirit, and founding our inquiries upon a fact confessedly universal in the animal world, a fact pointing to a remarkable relation of vital phenomena wherever, under certain defined conditions, life is exhibited, we have traced this relation through exhibitions physical, intellectual and moral, in health and in disease, until we have been led to the conviction that the most extended induction establishes the principle, *Contraria contrariis corroborantur*—as a universal law of animal life. In other words, throughout the animal kingdom observation proves that—Agents specifically adverse to certain functions or forces, exhibited within conservative limits, corroborate the reactive energy of these forces.

Our third general division introduced the last great claim of Humanity and Science, enjoining upon us, in the administration of our art, a steadfast adherence to “ the laws of life established by rigid Induction,” “ as the only revelation of Nature’s decalogue of which man may rationally avail himself,

for the preservation of health and the removal of disease.” Having challenged the history of medicine, down to our own age, to produce a single general law of universal authority in practice, we have advanced the highest testimony to prove that so late as the close of the last century, “the theoretical knowledge of the physician was reduced to nothing at the bedside of the sick, and that his practical skill resided entirely in a sort of instinctive acuteness”—that “the most happy views were less the effects of reasoning than of inspiration”—and consequently, that our art has been heretofore administered irrespective of the only laws which Humanity and Science can acknowledge for the government of the conscientious practitioner.

Contrasted with this avowed reliance on “instinct” and “inspiration,” we have exhibited the practical application of the general law of life, just repeated, to the treatment of disease. Adducing the concurrent voice of Scientific Medicine of all schools, that—Disease, always invading special functions or forces and to be removed only by their reactive energy, is necessarily meliorated by whatever corroborates this reaction—we arrive at the conclusion, which to us appears irresistible, that—

Agents indicated by the Homœopathic doctrine, (i. e. agents specifically adverse to functions or forces yielding under invasion, exhibited within conservative limits,) are Nature’s appropriate means of removing disease.

Furthermore—supported by the testimony of such men as Cabanis of France, Hunter and Paris of England, Girtanner and Hoffman of Germany, Godman, Wood and Rush of America, we have maintained that the powers of the *Materia Medica*,—determined solely, *ab usu in morbo*, and thus exposed to the unavoidable errors of morbid complication,—were not

reduced to general laws, and were even pronounced, before the London College of Physicians by their Professor of *Materia Medica*, "incapable of successful generalization." Consequently, as the key-stone of Therapeutics was avowedly wanting in the great arch of the medical sciences, and as Medicine is indebted to the Homœopathic doctrine for "the first successful generalization of the curative powers of the *Materia Medica*," and this under a single principle, a clear deduction from a general law of life, —it follows that the claim of Homœopathy is conclusively established, to rank among the medical sciences as *The Science of Therapeutics*.

In short, while Inductive Philosophy has placed beyond the reach of controversy, the truth of the Homœopathic doctrine as the long sought desideratum of the art, Medicine has been arraigned at the bar of inexorable Justice—Humanity and Science have stood forth her accusers—a jury from the most intelligent of her peers have pronounced their verdict, and an impartial judgment cannot but decree,—that, estranged from Homœopathy, she shall continue, with no better guides than "instinct," "inspiration," and "unreasoning experience," ever groping in the labyrinths of hypothesis;—whereas, opening her arms to this legitimate child of her household, henceforward, hers is a new, a glorious career,—the career of the Positive Sciences.

But, gentlemen, we have, on this occasion, a higher purpose than the support of Homœopathic doctrine; we have a loftier aim than the advancement of practical medicine. We would point the emulation of the profession to objects claiming precedence of the whole compass of Medicine as an art, fortified even with the Science of Therapeutics.

We have said that the great end of our association is, "to raise the moral and intellectual standard of our profession, until Medicine, instead of limping in the rear of the army of science, shall take her place in the van-guard, there to win for herself the laurels of a world's benedictions." This remark but faintly shadows what Humanity has a right to expect from us as a profession. We have said that as "collaborators of the wise and good of every clime, we would identify our aims with the great cause of Social Progress, to which the light of science is as 'the pillar of fire by night.'"—Gentlemen, it is, most emphatically, the light of Medical science, which God in his providence has ordained, to conduct a world sojourning in the desert, to the promised land of its hopes. Be assured, it is something more than Enthusiasm's dream, that Medicine is destined thus "to take her place in the van-guard" of the sciences, and thus "to win for herself the laurels of a world's benedictions."

We have already adverted to the advantages which our profession exclusively enjoys, for the investigation of the laws of life. Upon this ground, we have claimed for it the ennobling prerogative of establishing that great Central Science, around which, rejoicing in unwonted light, all that is valuable in Medicine, nay, all that is interesting to man, should harmoniously revolve. And we have chosen Medicine for our theme, not merely because appropriate to the occasion, but especially, because it served the purpose of happily illustrating the harmonizing influence of a single law of this incipient Science, in an arena of controversy where the champions of Truth not easily obtain a hearing, amid the tumult of combatants for victory.

If we trace human controversy to its origin, we perceive that men are prone to differ in opinion, not because they rea-

son differently from given premises, (for the logic of the maniac even, is often indisputable) but because their premises, originating in distant sources, differ as widely as the elements from which they spring. Hence, if the philosophers of every land, were furnished with one fountain which all must acknowledge as the common reservoir of elementary truth, is it not apparent that human opinion must ultimately settle upon definite conclusions, in the great philosophical questions on which it has been so long agitated? Moreover, if the researches of Inductive Philosophy, once earnestly directed to this paramount object, were crowned with success, (and in this age, who dare set bounds to its power in a legitimate field of inquiry?)—were a code of life's laws so far promulgated that it might be said, "the Science of Biology is established"—would not this be the "common reservoir" from which all Philosophy must draw its elementary principles, as the only sound basis of Psychology, Ethics, Natural Theology and Medicine, as well as of the sciences of Education, of Government—nay, (save Mathematics, Physics and their correlatives,) of all the sciences involving human destiny?

Let the laws of Man's Nature as a totality be clearly displayed, and have we not before us the laws of both Physiology and Psychology—and still more, a system of Ethics appealing for obedience, alike to the understandings and the hearts of all? Let the laws of psychological, physiological, and pathological Man, be developed as one harmonious system, and have we not plainly before us, established principles of Medicine, and unerring principles of Education, moral, intellectual and physical? And who will deny that Society should find the principles of its organization in the laws of the individual natures constituting its elements? or that Human legislation should never contravene the legislation of

Nature? Moreover, what is the legislation of Nature in reference to Humanity, but her authorized revelation of Humanity's relations with the Author of Nature Himself?

But, we cannot now dwell on this exhaustless subject. The hints which we have thrown out are ample to prove that, if the momentous questions abounding in the sciences referred to are ever to be settled, from the laws of Life's phenomena as expressed in the whole nature of man, must originate the elements of their solution.

Such are the great ends to be accomplished by the discovery of these laws; such the obligations which the spirit of the age imposes on the Medical profession; and such the sublime motives it holds out inciting to an investigation which has no parallel in the history of human research. Whether the doctrines which your speaker has assumed the responsibility of advancing, prove tenable or otherwise, it matters nothing to the immutable facts in this prolific field of Nature; facts which only the strict classification of Induction can render available to the exalted beneficence of Philosophy.

However we may differ, therefore, in our theoretical views the unspeakable importance of the laws of Life's phenomena, conceded by all, cannot but inspire the most generous emulation, oblivious of the past, and full of promise for the future. With civil institutions whose first element is freedom of thought—with a profession on which the hopes of humanity are suspended—and a field of inquiry almost untrodden—henceforth, our course is Onward—our watch-word,—*Explore!*

Gentlemen, my task is ended.—In expressing my acknowledgments for the protracted attention with which you have

listened to its execution, permit me to add, that the position in which I have been placed by your partiality, imposed a duty to conscience, to humanity, to medicine and its professors, paramount to all personal considerations. That duty, it has been my earnest endeavor to perform in a manner not unworthy the great interests committed to me, nor yet compromising in any degree, relations which I would ever proudly maintain, with the members of an association where intolerance acknowledges no objects but the enemies of Truth, and liberality no limits but the boundaries of science.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

The little skill displayed in the treatment of the following cases, recorded by Dr. Millingen, affords intrinsic evidence of the fidelity with which they are related, as experimental trials of Homœopathic practice.

"Case I.—A servant-maid received a blow of a stone upon the head. Severe headache, with dizziness and dimness of sight followed. Various means were resorted to; but general blood-letting could alone relieve the distressing symptoms, local bleeding not having been found of any avail. The relief, however, was not of long duration, and the distressing accidents recurred periodically, when abstraction of blood became indispensable. Reduced by these frequent evacuations, I was resolved to try the boasted "bleeding globules" of the Homœopathist, when, to my surprise, I obtained the same mitigation of symptoms which the loss of from 12 to 16 ounces of blood had previously accomplished. Since the first experiment no venesection became necessary, and the returns of the violent headache were invariably relieved by the same means."

"Case II.—An elderly woman was subject to an excruciating headache, with an evident determination of blood to the brain. Numerous leeches were constantly applied. The usual remedies indicated in similar affections were resorted to, but only afforded temporary relief. A Homœopathic dose of Aconite was given, and the relief which followed was beyond all possible expectation."

"Case III.—My much esteemed friend Dr. Grateloup, of Bordeaux, was subject to frequent sore-throats, which were relieved by local blood-letting, cataplasms, &c., but generally lasted several days, during which deglutition became most difficult. I persuaded him to try a dose of the Belladonna, neither of us having the slightest confidence in its expected effects. He took the globules at 12 o'clock, and at 5 P. M. the tumefaction of the tonsils, with their redness and sensibility, had subsided to such an extent that he was able to partake of some food, at dinner. The following morning all the symptoms, excepting a slight swelling, had subsided.

"Since this period Dr. G. has repeatedly tried the same preparation in similar cases, and with equal success. In my own practice, I can record seven cases of cynanche tonsillaris which were thus relieved in the course of a few hours."

"Case IV.—H—, a young woman on the establishment of the Countess of —, was suffering under hemiplegia, and it was resolved by Dr. Brulatour and myself to try the effects of the Nux Vomica. At this period the wonders of the Homœopathic practice had been extolled to the skies by its advocates, and we were resolved to give one of their supposed powerful preparations a fair trial. The girl was told that the powder she was about to take was simply a dose of calomel; and on calling upon her the following morning we did not expect that the slightest effect could have been obtained by this atomic dose; when, to our utter surprise, the patient told us that she had passed a miserable night, and described to us most minutely all the symptoms that usually follow the exhibition of a large dose of Strychnine. It is but fair to mention that the Homœopathic treatment did not cure the disease; but the manifest operation of this fractional dose, that could not possibly be denied, is a fact of considerable importance."

"Case V.—Mrs. —, of Brompton Bow, had labored under hectic fever for several months, and was so reduced by night perspirations that she was on the very brink of the grave. Called into consultation, I frankly told her husband that every possible means known in the profession had been most judiciously employed, and that I saw no prospect of obtaining relief. At the same time I mentioned to him that the Homœopathic practitioners pretended that they had found the means of relieving these distressing symptoms, which he might submit to an experimental trial if he thought proper. He immediately expressed a wish that it should be adopted. I gave her a Homœopathic dose of Phosphoric Acid and Stannum; and to the surprise of all around her, the night sweats did not break out at their usual hour—three o'clock in the morning. What renders this case still more interesting is the fact of these perspirations recurring so soon as the action of the medicine ceased; a circumstance so evidently ascertained, that the patient knew the very day when another dose became necessary."

"Case VI.—A daughter of the same lady was subject to deafness, which I attributed to a fulness of blood. This cause I clearly ascertained by the relief afforded by the application of a few leeches behind the ear. I was therefore induced, on a recurrence of the complaint, to endeavor to diminish vascular action by a dose of Aconite. The effects were evident in the course of four hours, when the deafness and the other symptoms of local congestion had entirely disappeared."

(B.)

Extract from a Lecture on Medical Education introductory to the Course of the Institutes of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania, for the session 1833-4, by SAMUEL JACKSON, M. D.

"Can this reform be much longer postponed? I believe not. The interests of the profession—the immediate pecuniary interests of practitioners, are too deeply implicated, to admit that things should long continue in their present state. It cannot be concealed, that public confidence in the knowledge and intelligence of the profession has been shaken—has been most materially impaired in some sections of the country. Every where does empiricism abound. In many districts it is warmly patronized and encouraged, not by the vulgar and ignorant only, but by the respected and intelligent; and, in one state, I believe, has been legalized by statute. The ancient Galenical empiricism, long supposed at an end, is, in part, resuscitated; if not with all of its olden frivolities, with those not less extravagant of modern date. Whence arises this state of things? Is it not from the observation, too apparent to the public, of the inferior grade of medical instruction? Do they perceive that wide difference in the acquirements of the regularly educated practitioner, and the empirical pretender, which should always distinguish them? In the regular practice, has not the treatment of disease too much degenerated into a blind routine, pursued in nearly every disease, however dissimilar in nature? Can it be denied, but that the only difference between the regular practice and empirical practice, is a routine treatment of merely different remedies, and not always to the disadvantage of the empirical method? In an arithmetical estimate, I apprehend, in the long run, the calculation of chances, by either plan, may appear equal; and then the difference in cost will decide the preference."

"There is but one mode of rescuing our profession from so degrading a rivalry; and that is, to raise the medical instruction of our country to a level with the philosophic character belonging to our science. Let medicine be, what in reality it is, a science of calculation, of combination, of induction, the elements of which are deduced from the phenomena of organized beings, and the relations of exterior agents with them, and you rise so infinitely above the crude and incorrect proceedings of empirical art, that the intelligent and observant can never be deceived by its vain boastings, or its illusory pretensions."

(C.)

Dr. Rush concludes his pithy observations with "the following conditional prophecy:"

"There are now some eight or ten medical schools in the United States; severally varying in their annual classes from thirty to three hundred and fifty. Without valuing here, the youthful pupils' admiration of the unparalleled talents of their respective masters; and apart from that especial slang of the day about 'splendid genius,' and 'gigantic minds;'—it seems from the dead level of scholastic medicine, that the intellectual character, with regard to scientific originality and to the accomplishments of learning, is about the same in all: the fancy and the fact of each being compiled from the same common materials of the art."

"But the first of those ten schools, which by design or accident shall employ professors, and a better taste will breed such, whose powers of observation can penetrate to the unrecorded phenomena, and compass the broad relationships of science;—who can find so much newness in nature, that they need not ape originality by perpetual vacillations in opinion;—who have not served so long at the table of the times, that they cannot relish, and dare not offer unsavory truth;—who can hold their steadfast—No, for a public benefit, when that public would set them in golden honor for saying—Yes, to its injury;—who have grown into respect with the wise, by a steady reliance on themselves; and who are not, when summoned to the all-requiring labors of fame, already half eaten up in character, by cancerous schemes for reputation:—I say, the first school that shall have the cunning forecast so to endow itself, though it may be at present the very dog-tail of them all, will soon be raised on high, as the Cynosure of American medicine: And like Aaron's serpent, as an emblem of our art, shall swallow up the serpents of those popular magicians, who in emulation, shall continue to play their theoretic sleights of instruction on the world."

"There never has been a school distinguished for strength or brilliancy of fame, without one or more professors of this character, and there cannot be. The multitudinous and lower house of the world, which yet contains 'many mansions' of rank and learning, will never advance such men to medical stations. But if there is yet a senate in science, and if it has not in truckling policy, gone down to a joint sitting with the popular branch,—that senate should."